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112025-0115IN THE CLAIMS:

- 1 1. (Currently Amended) A system for use in gathering information for use in managing  
2 a network, said system comprising:  
3 a plurality of network switches logically organized in a stack configuration so as to  
4 operate as a single logical switch, each network switch having a plurality of ports;  
5 an entity separate and remote from the plurality of switches for gathering said infor-  
6 mation;  
7 a multiplexer separate and remote from the plurality of network switches for selec-  
8 tively connecting, according to an arbitration scheme, said plurality of network switches one  
9 at a time to said remote entity, wherein  
10 each network switch is connected to said multiplexer by a separate connection, and  
11 transmits port activity-related raw data signals that are supplied to the remote entity via the  
12 multiplexer in accordance with the arbitration scheme, and are converted by the remote entity  
13 into network management-related information.
- 1 2. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said entity comprises a re-  
2 mote monitoring probe.
- 1 3. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said multiplexer comprises  
2 a network hub.

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1 4. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said multiplexer comprises  
2 a network media access unit.

1 5. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, wherein said switches are config-  
2 ured to generate control signals for implementing said arbitration scheme.

1 6. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 5, wherein said multiplexer is config-  
2 ured to be controlled by said control signals.

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1 7. (Previously amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein said raw data signals  
2 comprise switch port activity information, and said switches are configured to permit user  
3 selection of particular switch port activity information to be supplied to the remote entity via  
4 the multiplexer.

1 8. (Originally filed) A system according to claim 1, further comprising program proc-  
2 esses executed by said switches for carrying out said arbitration scheme.

1 9. (Currently amended) A system for use in gathering network management informa-  
2 tion, said system comprising:  
3 a plurality of network switches configured in a stacked configuration, each switch  
4 having a plurality of ports including a probe port for receiving switch activity-related infor-  
5 mation from other ports of the respective switch;

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6 a connection between the probe port of a first network switch to a remote monitoring  
7 probe that is separate and remote from the plurality of network switches;

8 means for interconnecting the network switches through their respective probe ports;  
9 and

10 means for selectively transmitting the switch activity-related information received at  
11 the probe ports of the network switches, in the form of raw data signals to the separate and  
12 remote monitoring probe, one network switch at a time, through the probe port of the first  
13 network switch, wherein

14 the separate and remote monitoring probe converts the received switch activity-  
15 related information into network management-related information.

1 10. (Previously amended) A system according to claim 9, wherein said switches are con-  
2 figured to implement an arbitration scheme for determining the order in which the activity-  
3 related information of each switch is provided to said probe.

1 11. (Previously amended) A system according to claim 9, wherein said probe ports being  
2 solely for transmission of said activity-related information.